

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method in a communication system of transferring control of a user-plane entity from a first control-plane entity to a second control-plane entity, comprising the steps of:

5 sending, by the user-plane entity to the first control-plane entity, a set of identifying parameters;

sending, by the first control-plane entity to the second control-plane entity, the set of identifying parameters;

10 determining, in the second control-plane entity, whether the user-plane entity can be controlled by the second control-plane entity; and

15 if the user-plane entity can be controlled by the second control-plane entity, then sending, by the second control-plane entity to the user-plane entity, an indication that a change in control-plane entities has occurred and that at least some resources of the user-plane entity that were controlled by the first control-plane entity are to be controlled by the second control-plane entity.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the first control-plane entity sends the set of identifying parameters to the second control-plane entity based on a location of a remote terminal in communication with the user-plane entity.

20 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the first control-plane entity sends the set of identifying parameters to the second control-plane entity based on a status of the first control-plane entity.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the first control-plane entity sends the set of identifying parameters to the second control-plane entity based on relative loads in the first and second control-plane entities.

25 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the communication system is a GPRS network and the set of identifying parameters are sent in a Forward Relocation Request message from the first control-plane entity to the second control-plane entity.

30 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of sending, by the user-plane entity to the first control-plane entity, a set of identifying parameters is executed in response to receiving, by the user-plane entity, an indication that a change of control-plane entity is required.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the indication that a change of control-plane entity is required is sent based on a location of a remote terminal in communication with the user-plane entity.